

342 COMMENTARY ON MACAULAY'S
HISTORY

and the landing of James in Ireland
disturbed the task of
organisation.

Matters here in Parliament are satisfactory
enough, and
I do not doubt that I shall have reason to be
satisfied with
them, but their manner and form of
government do not
allow things to proceed as quickly as is
necessary*at this
conjuncture. It is certain that King James has
left Brest or
will do so the first favourable wind for
Ireland. He has
only officers and money with him. This
business will give
a me more occupation here than I could have
wished at this
conjuncture, and above all if he has planned to
cross into
Scotland, as I have reason to believe. I work
as hard as I
can to put everything in order, but as my reign
is very new
and affairs in great disorder everywhere, I
have no little
difficulty, and my health is not of the best and
the climate
here makes my cough much worse, which
makes me very
feeble.¹

Again and again he has to complain ' that
the affairs here
in Parliament do not proceed as quickly as the
urgency
requires, which gives me no little annoyance
not to be able
to remedy/ Waldeck had to contend with
difficulties of a
similar kind in the Netherlands. ' I am
persuaded that you
and I have on our hands the most
troublesome affairs in
all Europe/ wrote William. ' I pity you with all
my heart
for all the torments and vexations which
you have. I
assure you that I have as many here. It is
only the good

cause which can console us and give us the
necessary
patience/ In another letter he announced
Mackay's defeat
at Killiecrankie: it was uncertain yet whether
that general
was killed or taken,² A French squadron
which it was
hoped to intercept had got safe to Brest and
for three weeks
there had been no news of the English fleet.

¹William to Waldeck, *ca.* Mar. 5-15, 1689. Muller, ii. 143.

²This sentence casts doubt upon the story told by
Macaulay (IV, 1636
[xiii]) of the reception in London of the news of
Killiecrankie.